

- 6 -

Appl. No. 09/531,818

Atty. Docket No. 13DV13576

REMARKS

By way of this amendment, claim 1 has been amended. Claims 1-20 are currently pending in the application. Applicant hereby requests further examination and reconsideration in view of the following remarks.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-10 and 13-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Sebastian and claims 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sebastian. These grounds of rejection are respectfully traversed.

Sebastian discloses a computer-based system and method for the concurrent design of a part, the tool to make the part, and the processes used in making the part. Sebastian utilizes a system having a central processing unit 32, a memory 34, an input device 35 and an output device 36. The input device 35 may be a link to another computer system for receiving instructions over a network (see column 11, lines 3-5). The output device 36 can be any device such as a computer monitor capable of displaying data and/or diagrams (see column 11, lines 5-8). The system contains a number of modules stored in the memory 34 and executed by the CPU 32. The CPU 32 executes the modules, particularly the core design module, to design the part, the tool to make the part, and the process to make the part.

Independent claim 1, as amended herein, recites many features not taught or suggested by Sebastian. First, claim 1 has been amended to recite the step of causing an input screen to be displayed at a second (requesting) location to collect information about the recommended process sequence of steps for performing said process. Support for this recitation is found on pages 10 and 11 of the present specification. Sebastian fails to disclose displaying an input screen for collecting information. While the output device 36 is described as being able to output (arguably by displaying) "information and diagrams concerning part geometry, draw direction, material specification and machine specification," this

- 7 -

Appl. No. 09/531,818

Atty. Docket No. 13DV13576

appears to relate to outputting the results of the processing; there is no indication that the output device 36 displays an input screen to a requestor for collecting information. Furthermore, there is no indication that the output device 36 would display anything to a requestor at a remote location. While Sebastian contemplates the possibility of receiving instructions over a network, there is no suggestion of displaying data over a network or otherwise to remote locations.

Second, claim 1 recites the step of using a computer network to convey a response from a first (processing) location to a remote second (requesting) location. To the extent that Sebastian even teaches producing a response to a request for a recommended process sequence of steps for performing a process, there is no teaching that the response is conveyed over a computer network back to a remote requesting location. There is simply no teaching or suggestion in Sebastian that the design generated by the CPU 32 is conveyed over a computer network from the CPU 32 (the processing location) back to the remote location where the request originated. The Examiner asserts that this step is taught by lines 5-14 in column 11 of Sebastian. This passage indicates that the output device 36 can output information and diagrams concerning part geometry, draw direction, material specification and machine specification. However, there is no indication that the output device 36 is connected to the CPU 32 via a computer network. Therefore, there is no suggestion that the information displayed by the output device 36 is conveyed over a computer network or that the output device is located at a remote location. Sebastian fails to disclose conveying a response to a request for a recommended process sequence of steps over a computer network.

Independent claim 10 similarly recites the step of using a computer network to convey a response including a recommended process sequence of steps from one location to another location where the request originated. Sebastian fails to disclose this limitation for the same reasons set forth above.

- 8 -

Appl. No. 09/531,818

Atty. Docket No. 13DV13576

For the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1 and 10 are allowable over Sebastian. Claims 2-9 and claims 11-15 depend from claims 1 and 10, respectively, and are thus also believed to be allowable. Furthermore, at least some of these dependent claims set forth limitations not met by the prior art. For instance, there does not appear to be any suggestion of using a decision tree or a notes tree in processing the recommended process, as set forth in claims 2-5. The passages cited by the Examiner do not disclose either decision trees or notes trees.

Independent claim 16 recites a method for providing information concerning recommended steps for performing a process. This method includes using a decision tree having at least two possible sequences of steps for performing a process. Sebastian does not disclose providing a decision tree having at least two possible sequences of steps for performing a process or using, in a digital computer, a request and a decision tree to determine a recommended process sequence of steps for performing the process of a product.

For the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 16 is allowable over Sebastian. Claims 17-20 depend from claim 16 and are thus also believed to be allowable.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the claims are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the objections and rejections is requested. Allowance of claims 1-20 at an early date is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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